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Influence of Sociodemographic and Professional Characteristics on Antibiotic Prescribing: A Cross-Sectional Study In The Center Region of Portugal

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Introduction

Antibiotic prescribing is very complex process influenced by medical and non-medical aspects. Accordingly, our aim was to evaluate the influence of GPs' sociodemographic and professional characteristics on the quality of antibiotic prescribing, in Portugal.

Material and Methods

An observational cross-sectional study was conducted (November 2011 to February 2012) in the catchment area covered by Portugal's Centre Regional Health Administration (1094 General Practitioners (GPs) working at 84 primary care facilities). A validated, self-administered questionnaire was used to assess sociodemographic and clinical practice information. To evaluate the quality of physician antibiotic prescribing, we've assessed the twelve quality indicators validated by Coenen, S. et al (2007), *per* physician *per* year (2010, 2011 and 2012). Logistic regression using crude and adjusted analysis was performed.

Results

The response rate was 46.6%. Older GPs revealed to have better performance of antibiotic prescribing [OR (95% CI) = 2.21; 1.08 – 4.54; $P < 0.05$]. About GPs who also work at the emergency department, statistical significant was found on their relation with poor prescribing [OR (95% CI) = 0.29; 0.16 – 0.54; $P < 0.05$]. Workload also revealed to influence the quality of antibiotic prescribing: more patients seen per day [OR (95% CI) = 0.97; 0.94 – 1.00; $P < 0.05$] and more patients seen per week in the emergency department [OR (95% CI) = 0.98; 0.97 – 0.99; $P < 0.05$] were related with lower quality on antibiotic prescribing.

Conclusions

These findings revealed that sociodemographic and professional characteristics could influence the quality of antibiotic prescribing, which is a very important step to understand this complex process aiming to tackle a global concern: the misprescription of antibiotics.

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